

Message Text

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ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
INR-10 LAB-04 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 L-03
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /089 W
-----104119 050710Z /21

R 041603Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7556
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N N I D E N T I A L CAIRO 09999

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ELAB ICFTU EG
SUBJECT: ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY'S VISIT TO CAIRO

REF: BRUSSELS 6370

1. EMBASSY NOT SURPRISED ICFTU SEC GEN OTTO KERSTEN
FOUND DIVISIONS IN EGYPTIAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (EFL)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WITH MANY CONSIDERING "THE ICFTU
HOPELESSLY ANTIARAB". EFL SOURCE TELLS US LEFTIST
MEMBER OF MINISTRY OF MANPOWER AND TRAINING'S INTER-
NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS DEPARTMENT PREPARED "FACT SHEET"
ON ICFTU TO BRIEF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PRIOR TO TWO HOUR
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MEETING. SHEET WAS CLEVER MONTAGE OF FACT, FICTION,
AND INNUENDO.

2. ICFTU DESCRIBED AS ORGANIZATION WHOLLY COMMITTED
TO ISRAELI VIEWPOINT UNTIL 1977. FURTHER, ICFTU SAID
TO OPPOSE SOCIALISM, AT LEAST AS THIS PRACTICED IN
THIRD WORLD. AVERAGE EGYPTIAN TRADE UNIONIST ON READING

SHEET WOULD LIKELY QUESTION VALUE OF ESTABLISHING ANY
RELATIONSHIP WITH ICFTU.

3. FURTHER, SOURCE ALLEGED TRANSLATOR PROVIDED KERSTEN
WAS LEFTIST AND IMPLIED TRANSLATIONS MAY HAVE BEEN
SURPOSEFULLY DISTORTED TO INCREASE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S
DIVISIVENESS.

4. SOURCE CONFIRMED THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION
AMONG MEMBER UNIONS IN EFL ON UTILITY ESTABLISHING
RELATIONS WITH ICFTU, AFL-CIO, OR OTHER WESTERN LABOR
CONFEDERATIONS. MAJORITY SAID TO FAVOR THIS BUT
RELUCTANT PROCEED WITH PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN
VIEW SEVERE CRITICISM FROM LEFT. (AS NOTED CAIRO 9173--
NOTAL--LOCAL ILO REP ESTIMATED EFL PRESIDENT SAAD AHMED
OPPOSED BY ONE-QUARTER TO ONE-THIRD OF CONFEDERATION'S
MEMBERS, LARGELY AS A RESULT HIS PARTICIPATION IN
SADAT'S PEACE INITIATIVE.) SOURCE THOUGHT KERSTEN
VISIT USEFUL BUT OPINED IT SHOULD BE FOLLOWED BY
MORE FREQUENT MEETINGS BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES IN-
DIVIDUAL EUROPEAN LABOR UNIONS AND THEIR EGYPTIAN
COUNTERPARTS.

5. COMMENT: EFL PRESIDENT SAAD AHMED, WHO ALSO
MINISTER OF MANPOWER AND TRAINING, STRONGLY FAVORS
IMPROVING FEDERATION'S LINKS WITH WEST. TO THIS
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END, HE CLAIMS TO BE OPERATING UNDER MANDATE FROM
PEOPLES ASSEMBLY SPEAKER SAYID MAREI--CLOSE SADAT
CONFIDANT. NEVERTHELESS, HE DOES FACE INTERNAL
PRESSURE ON REORIENTING EFL FOREIGN RELATIONS AND
IS PROCEEDING CAUTIOUSLY. UNION-TO-UNION CONTACTS,
AS SUGGESTED BY SOURCE, WOULD PROBABLY STRENGTHEN
SAAD AHMED'S HAND IN INTER-EFL WRANGLING. EILTS

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